

Minutes

LVMS PTA General Meeting

Thursday, September 22, 2021, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

In-person at LVMS library and broadcast over Zoom

In Attendance: Ashley Collins, Jessica DeCicco, Nina Dorlon, Allyson Gallup, Mark Ippolito, Jocelyn Morgan, Nancy Rosenblatt, Tori Reade, Nancy Rosenblatt, Chris Satmary. (Not all virtual attendee names are captured here).

1. Welcome / Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with PTA President Nina Dorlon welcoming attendees, who were present over zoom and in the room. She stated that topics would cover committee updates and brainstorming for the year ahead, with the intent of continuously fundraising to make big improvements that impact the school and students. Board members were also introduced, Tori Reade and Chris Satmary as Membership Chairs; Allyson Gallup as Treasurer.

2. Approval of Minutes

3. Reports

3A. Treasurer's Report, Allyson Gallup: Allyson presented the PTA account balances, citing current monthly income at over \$3,000 from membership dues.

- Overall, there is \$41,000 in the PTA's checking and raffle account.
- The Audit Committee Review will occur in the next few weeks, to include IRS filings.
- The LVMS PTA's Game of Chance license has lapsed. To reinstate, we need the articles of incorporation and a letter of good standing from the NJPTA.
- Allyson confirmed that membership dues make up a large part of the overall budget in terms of revenue, with \$4 of each \$20 membership funneled to our NJPTA membership dues.

3B. Committee Reports

Membership. Chair, Tori Reade, reported that 128 families joined the PTA to date, for 2021-2022. We have 728 students. The floor then opened for discussion of ways to increase membership. It was determined that holding a new membership raffle, with a chance to win a \$50 credit toward LVMS Spirit Wear could drive interest and signups. The raffle drawing will happen at the November 2 PTA Meeting.

It was also suggested that targeted messages (emails) be sent to families in each grade level, to pinpoint how the PTA benefits the student at that particular stage in his/her middle school experience, i.e. 8th grade graduation. Key message, "Your membership supports the PTA".

A suggestion was also made to create a video with LVMS students giving a first person account of how the PTA impacts them, or with a parent voiceover. The group agreed that this idea should be tabled until the 2022 member drive, in order to execute over the summer. Images and script ideas should be collected throughout the year, and placed in the PTA google drive.

Lastly, the group decided to collect memberships at the upcoming Long Valley Raiders football pep rally on September 28. Chris Satmary will produce signage. Nina Dorlon and one other volunteer will act as greeters at the PTA table, with member applications at the ready, online and paper. Allyson offered to purchase a square reader to process credit card/electronic purchases. Nina made a motion to purchase the reader, Tori seconded the motion. And all were in favor.

Communications. Ashley Collins, Communications Chair, reported that the first PTA newsletter was published/sent to members through memberhub on September 10; a monthly publication. Issues can be accessed on the website, and will be posted to Facebook. A refreshed version of the LVMS PTA website will soon go live. This was redesigned (look, navigation and content) by Tori Reade. PTA social media activity continues with daily, if not weekly posts, on Facebook and Instagram. Ashley also developed a communications calendar in google spreadsheets to manage and plan PTA messaging in all channels.

Student Socials. Chris Satmary, 6th grade Social Chair, reported that she and co-chair Tori Reade have a list of possible social venues/activities: ziplining at Sky Adventure; SkyZone; skating at an ice rink or indoors at Villa; Liebenzell or Meadowbrook for outdoor fun; or inviting a third party to come to LVMS for laser tag or other activity. The group discussed whether the PTA would have use of the school gym. Mr. Ippolito does not have an answer on that yet.

The group then discussed opening up student socials to all grades, including families. Ideas included a winter social at Harrington Park, with use of the ice rink. Nina Dorlon made a motion to cancel the PTA's Cheddar Up subscription (since Memberhub offers online transactions for events/purchases). The motion was seconded, and all were in favor. Nina Dorlon then made a motion to decrease the Reflections budget from \$350 to \$250. It was seconded and all were in favor.

Assemblies

Chair Jessica DeCicco presented the PTA with three possible student assemblies:

- "Yes You Can" Assembly with 3 grade level sessions focused on diversity and sensitivity that can be conducted outside. Given by Lloyd Bacharach. Cost is \$3500.
- "Emotion into Art" with a focus on student motivation, given by Tom Varano. The school gets to keep the art piece. Cost is \$5,000.
- Dr. Paul Wichansky, "Just the Way You Are", was the third option. LVMS has hosted him in the past; well received by students/teachers. Cost is \$1200.

Other.

New ideas were proposed for fundraising such as a murder mystery dinner.

There are several PTA Committee positions still open and needing to be filled:

Secretary / Teacher Grants / 7th & 8th Grade Social Chairs / Holiday Shop Co-Chair / 8th Grade Celebration Co-Chair / Book Fair / Student Assemblies Co-Chair / Standing Rules Committee / Fundraising Chair

4. **Principal's Report:** Mr. Mark Ippolito presented an overview of the LVMS math program. He explained that the Math program has not changed. Due to Covid, the school was unable to assess math skills; thus, unable to discern which kids needed advanced math, (they guessed). Testing is now in place, with ongoing measures in the classrooms so children can progress through the levels at their own pace. No matter what class you start in you can end up in the most advanced class by 8th grade if the student has the ability to do so.

5. Other:

Teachers Nancy Rosenblatt and Elisha Sumeraro (not in attendance) were introduced at the PTA's new teacher liaisons. Nancy proposed holding a carnival or street fair for the students in the Spring. This would take place during the school day, with games/events that incorporate STEM classes, and could include inflatables, kickball, food trucks. A sort of "Field Fair" with parent, teacher involvement.

The group then discussed ways the PTA could fund large school initiatives and needs, and getting a wish list from school administration. Ideas included updates & improvements to the PAC's windows & lighting and school fields. Mr. Ippolito cited funding student experiences as important.

Elections are coming up in November for the district' Board of Education. There are three new candidates, while two are up for re-election. We discussed the PTA hosting a Meet the Candidates night in the LVMS PAC.

Mr. Ippolito suggested that the PTA evolve/change over to a PTO, as there are fewer restrictions/bylaws.

6. **Conclusion / Next Meeting.** The meeting concluded at 9:11 p.m. The next PTA meeting will be Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. live at the LVMS Library, and virtually over Zoom. Upcoming meetings are: Nov.2, Dec 2, Jan 4, Feb 1, March 2, April 4 (Monday), May 3, June 7